

Shipping to Shows

By Alan Opdyke

I would like to put on paper some of my thoughts on shipping to shows and carrying fish to shows. First of all when I attend a show I take my fish in a converted hard side catalog case that I have lined on all sides with Styrofoam. I also took the time to seal each corner and sides with silicone.



I use plastic jars to hold the fish. I have some that have screw on lids and some that have an o-ring seal with a snap down lid. I like the O-ring style the best but I do use both as I already have several of each.

To ship to shows I use 4" x 12" bags I acquire from a company called Aquatic Specialties. Their phone number is (630) 627-8051 if you would like to order bags. In lots of 1000 the price is very reasonable. I use a few ounces of water and tie the bag at the end in a knot. I do not like rubber bands at all. I have had too many rubber bands break over the years while the fish were in transit. Like everyone else I invert the first bag into the second bag and tie another knot. Now there should be no corners for the guppies to get stuck in as your carrier of preference turns the box over and over. I ship in plain white Styrofoam boxes with no outside cardboard box. To me the addition of another box only adds weight and increases shipping costs. In the spring and fall of the year I tape a heat pack inside the lid to keep the fish warm. One thing that is a problem, especially if you are in a hurry, is getting the first bag into the second bag. I start the second bag inside the first until the air stops it. Then I insert a short piece of rigid airline tubing down between the two bags and the air escapes out the tubing as I slide the bag in the rest of the way.



To keep the fish from jostling around I fill all voids in the box with Styrofoam peanuts, which are available at Office Depot.

While we are on the subject I would like to talk a bit about carriers. I have recently changed to Airborne. This is the greatest thing to come along in a long while. Once you call them on their 800 number and get all set up with an account it is a breeze to ship to shows. Airborne will furnish you with preprinted labels with your name and account number on them. All you have to do is take your fish to them and they do the rest. This eliminates taking money to the post office since they (Airborne) bill you and eliminates the need for sending a blank check or guesstimate check to the show people. It also is a great help to the hosting show as all they have to do is notify Airborne they have a pickup of so many boxes on Monday after the show. No fuss no muss. It is super!

One additional thing you can do to help the hosting show is prepare your entry form in duplicate and only list the entries you have not all the bags you sent. For instance if you send a Blue Tank entry write Blue Tank only once on the entry form and use some sort of common code on the form and bags like BT1. Don't send in a form with two lines that say Blue Tank 1 and Blue Tank 2 that is supposed to be only one entry. If it is a tank entry simply put the same number on both bags. The show people will find both bags, as they will be looking for them since it is marked a "tank entry".

Bag ID Number	Show Entry Number	Class Entered	Auction			Return		Entry Fee
			No	Yes	Price	Pickup	Mail	
Bag B1		Blue Tank	X				X	3.00

Do not do the following for one entry please!

Bag ID Number	Show Entry Number	Class Entered	Auction			Return		Entry Fee
			No	Yes	Price	Pickup	Mail	
Bag 1		Blue Tank	X				X	3.00
Bag 2								

Show entries are down right now and I believe it is the direct result of some major players not showing at present. But, be that as it may, we can all ship a couple more entries and make that up. If everyone shipped Airborne putting on a show with shipped in entries would be a snap for the host club. **ENTER THE SHOWS!**